

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

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From the
INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINING AUTHORITY

PCT

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BARKER BRETTELL
138 Hagley Road
Edgbaston
BIRMINGHAM, B16 9PW
GRANDE BRETAGNE

NOTIFICATION OF TRANSMITTAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT (PCT Rule 71.1)

Date of mailing
(day/month/year) 17.01.2005

Applicant's or agent's file reference
JED1217DAW

IMPORTANT NOTIFICATION

International application No.
PCT/GB 03/04432

International filing date (day/month/year)
13.10.2003

Priority date (day/month/year)
11.10.2002

Applicant
AQUASOL LIMITED et al.

1. The applicant is hereby notified that this International Preliminary Examining Authority transmits herewith the international preliminary examination report and its annexes, if any, established on the international application.
2. A copy of the report and its annexes, if any, is being transmitted to the International Bureau for communication to all the elected Offices.
3. Where required by any of the elected Offices, the International Bureau will prepare an English translation of the report (but not of any annexes) and will transmit such translation to those Offices.
4. **REMINDER**

The applicant must enter the national phase before each elected Office by performing certain acts (filing translations and paying national fees) within 30 months from the priority date (or later in some Offices) (Article 39(1)) (see also the reminder sent by the International Bureau with Form PCT/IB/301).

Where a translation of the international application must be furnished to an elected Office, that translation must contain a translation of any annexes to the international preliminary examination report. It is the applicant's responsibility to prepare and furnish such translation directly to each elected Office concerned.

For further details on the applicable time limits and requirements of the elected Offices, see Volume II of the PCT Applicant's Guide.

The applicant's attention is drawn to Article 33(5), which provides that the criteria of novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability described in Article 33(2) to (4) merely serve the purposes of international preliminary examination and that "any Contracting State may apply additional or different criteria for the purposes of deciding whether, in that State, the claimed inventions is patentable or not" (see also Article 27(5)). Such additional criteria may relate, for example, to exemptions from patentability, requirements for enabling disclosure, clarity and support for the claims.

Name and mailing address of the international
preliminary examining authority:



European Patent Office
D-80298 Munich
Tel. +49 89 2399 - 0 Tx: 523656 epmu d
Fax: +49 89 2399 - 4465

Authorized Officer

Loeper, S



Tel. +49 89 2399-2569



PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

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INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT
(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

Applicant's or agent's file reference JED1217DAW	FOR FURTHER ACTION See Notification of Transmittal of International Preliminary Examination Report (Form PCT/PEA/416)	
International application No. PCT/GB 03/04432	International filing date (<i>day/month/year</i>) 13.10.2003	Priority date (<i>day/month/year</i>) 11.10.2002
International Patent Classification (IPC) or both national classification and IPC B65D75/30		
Applicant AQUASOL LIMITED et al.		
<p>1. This international preliminary examination report has been prepared by this International Preliminary Examining Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.</p> <p>2. This REPORT consists of a total of 4 sheets, including this cover sheet.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, i.e. sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis for this report and/or sheets containing rectifications made before this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions under the PCT).</p> <p>These annexes consist of a total of 3 sheets.</p>		
<p>3. This report contains indications relating to the following items:</p> <p>I <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Basis of the opinion</p> <p>II <input type="checkbox"/> Priority</p> <p>III <input type="checkbox"/> Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability</p> <p>IV <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of unity of invention</p> <p>V <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reasoned statement under Rule 66.2(a)(ii) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement</p> <p>VI <input type="checkbox"/> Certain documents cited</p> <p>VII <input type="checkbox"/> Certain defects in the international application</p> <p>VIII <input type="checkbox"/> Certain observations on the international application</p>		
Date of submission of the demand 10.05.2004	Date of completion of this report 17.01.2005	
Name and mailing address of the international preliminary examining authority:  European Patent Office D-80298 Munich Tel. +49 89 2399 - 0 Tx: 523656 epmu d Fax: +49 89 2399 - 4465	Authorized Officer Ungureanu, M Telephone No. +49 89 2399-8418 	

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
EXAMINATION REPORT**

International application No. **PCT/GB 03/04432**

I. Basis of the report

1. With regard to the elements of the international application (*Replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to this report since they do not contain amendments (Rules 70.16 and 70.17):*

Description, Pages

1, 3-11 as originally filed
2 filed with telefax on 16.12.2004

Claims, Numbers

1-10 filed with telefax on 16.12.2004

Drawings, Sheets

1/3-3/3 as originally filed

2. With regard to the language, all the elements marked above were available or furnished to this Authority in the language in which the international application was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.

These elements were available or furnished to this Authority in the following language: , which is:

- ☐ the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of the international search (under Rule 23.1(b)).
☐ the language of publication of the international application (under Rule 48.3(b)).
☐ the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international preliminary examination (under Rule 55.2 and/or 55.3).
3. With regard to any nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence disclosed in the international application, the international preliminary examination was carried out on the basis of the sequence listing:
- ☐ contained in the international application in written form.
☐ filed together with the international application in computer readable form.
☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in written form.
☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in computer readable form.
☐ The statement that the subsequently furnished written sequence listing does not go beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed has been furnished.
☐ The statement that the information recorded in computer readable form is identical to the written sequence listing has been furnished.
4. The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:
- ☐ the description, pages:
☐ the claims, Nos.:
☐ the drawings, sheets:

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
EXAMINATION REPORT**

International application No. PCT/GB 03/04432

5. ☐ This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed (Rule 70.2(c)).

(Any replacement sheet containing such amendments must be referred to under item 1 and annexed to this report.)

6. Additional observations, if necessary:

V. Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Yes: Claims	1-10
	No: Claims	
Inventive step (IS)	Yes: Claims	1-10
	No: Claims	
Industrial applicability (IA)	Yes: Claims	1-10
	No: Claims	

2. Citations and explanations

see separate sheet

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
EXAMINATION REPORT - SEPARATE SHEET**

International application No. PCT/GB 03/04432

Re Item V

Reasoned statement with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

The invention refers to a product containerisation system for skin packing that allows a good protection against mechanical damage and easy dispensing of the product by the user. A product containerisation system according to the preamble of claim 1, is, for example, known from document US-A-4411364.

According to the invention the polymeric film provides the primary packaging of the product, is water soluble and arranged such that it can shear by twisting the product in a precise way.

The special arrangement and selection of the polymeric film according to the features of claim 1 makes the subject-matter of this claim neither known from, nor rendered obvious by, the available prior art.

Therefore the subject-matter of claim 1 is considered new and involving an inventive step (Article 33(2) and 33 (3) PCT). Consequently, the subject-matter of each dependent claims 2 to 10 fulfils as well the requirements of novelty and inventive step.

Furthermore, claims 1 to 10 are considered as susceptible of industrial application.

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mechanical damage. Since the flow wrapped tablets are packed loose in the point of sale carton, any movement, particularly if excessive, will cause the tablets contained within the flow wrap to come into contact with one another, potentially resulting in damage. Where the tablet is irritant or hazardous to the user in other ways, the user, before being able to dispense a tablet, needs to remove the flow wrap barrier material, exposing himself or herself to a potential hazard. In addition, the flow wrap barrier material is now waste and needs to be disposed of.

Product containerisation systems have been developed in which a product or products is attached to one side, hereinafter referred to as the upper side, of a planar sheet which is subsequently folded into a package. By this means, a number of packaging steps is able to be combined, thereby eliminating at least one packaging process, as well as affording a higher level of protection for the products against mechanical damage and increased convenience for the consumer.

US-A-4411364 discloses a product containerisation system for a liquid or semi-solid product contained in a sealed pouch wherein the pouch is attached to a paperboard substrate by a plastic skin. The pouch is immobilised on the substrate by the skin to eliminate or minimise the possibility of the pouch leaking or rupturing due to "wave action" of the product from movement and shock in the shipping and distribution cycle. The pouch provides the primary packaging for the product and the plastic skin provides a secondary packaging. The skin can be broken to allow the pouch with the product sealed therein to be removed intact and thereafter the pouch can be ruptured to release the product.

Statement of Invention

According to the invention there is provided a product containerisation system as defined in claim 1.

Skin packing is a term which will be readily recognised by the skilled addressee of the specification and is a method of forming a skin of a polymeric material over items placed on a backing sheet or board.

As an example which is by no means limiting of the preferred embodiment, the products may be tablets which are precisely placed in two groups of 8

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CLAIMS

1. A product containerisation system created by attaching at least one product (X) to one side of a planar sheet (103) by overlaying a polymeric film (101) over the product (X) and one side of the planar sheet (103) by a skin packing process, and then folding the planar sheet (103) into an erected container or package, characterised in that the polymeric film (101) is water soluble or water dispersible and provides the primary packaging for the product (X) wherein the polymeric film (101) is selected and arranged such that twisting the product (X) and overlying film (101) about an axis (105) transverse to the planar sheet (103) shears the polymeric film (101) generally around the perimeter (107) of the product (X) adjacent the planar sheet (103).
2. A product containerisation system according to Claim 1 in which the polymeric film (101) is embrittled or otherwise weakened in order to facilitate shearing of the polymeric film (101) for easy removal of the product (X).
3. A product containerisation system according to Claim 1 or 2 where the polymeric film (101) is made substantially from poly-vinyl alcohol (PVOH).
4. A product containerisation system according to any one of the preceding Claims where the planar sheet (103) is corrugated fibreboard, carton board or folding boxboard.
5. A product containerisation system according to any of Claims 1 to 3 where the planar sheet (103) is non-porous to the passage of air when one side of the planar sheet (103) is subjected to a vacuum.
6. A product containerisation system according to Claim 5 where the non-porous sheet (103) is a polymeric sheet or a ribbed extrusion of a

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polymeric material.

7. A product containerisation system according to any one of the preceding claims, in which the planar sheet (103) comprises a series of panels (A-H) arranged in a row, a plurality of such panels (A-D) having at least one product (X) mounted thereon, and in which each panel (A-H) is folded with respect to its adjacent panel to form a package in the form of a square or rectangular roll.
8. A product containerisation system according to claim 7, in which the planar sheet (103) comprises at least five panels (A-H).
9. A product containerisation system according to claim 7 or 8, in which each of the series of panels (A-D) has one product (X) mounted thereon.
10. A system for the preparation of a package according to any one of the preceding claims.

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AMENDED SHEET

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